

Advancing Career Pathways Innovation Act

Senator Al Franken

Throughout the country, hundreds of thousands of jobs remain unfilled because applicants don't have the specialized skills and training to do them. This issue has become known as the skills gap. As our economy and technology continue to evolve, this gap will continue to grow.

In order to address this skill gap, we need to train our workforce for 21st Century jobs. The **Advancing Career Pathways Innovation Act** will authorize the Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Secretary of Labor, to support the initial establishment of career pathway partnerships between K-12 schools and industry. These partnerships would require industry to contribute matching funds, equipment, resources, or facilities to create career pathway programs that ensure relevant, on-the-job training for specialized fields.

Three-year, renewable grants will provide start-up funds for school districts (or consortia of districts) to help transform career and technical education for their students by building or expanding a career pathways partnership program. Technical assistance for the application and management of these funds would be provided out of the Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education.

Start-up funds can be used to hire a designated Career Pathways Partnership Coordinator to develop and oversee the partnerships. Other allowable uses of funds include

- new equipment, infrastructure or transportation costs,
- development of curriculum that offers industry-certified credentials,
- recruitment and/or training of CTE teachers,
- externship opportunities for educators to spend time in industry,
- youth apprenticeship opportunities, and
- offering college credit for high school coursework at no cost to students.

Rural and Native-Serving District Carve Out

The grant program will include designated funding set aside for rural and native-serving districts (15% of the authorized funding for rural districts and 5% of the authorized funding for native-serving districts, including BIE schools and tribal reservations). The bill will also require designated personnel within the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education to support rural and native-serving districts with preparation of grant applications.

The Advancing Career Pathways Innovation Act has support from the following organizations:

- National Skills Coalition
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- Association For Manufacturing Technology
- Minnesota Association of School Administrators
- Minnesota Technology & Engineering Education Association
- Minnesota Association of Career & Technical Administrators
- Minnesota Rural Education Association
- Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce
- Care Providers of Minnesota
- Minnesota Hospital Association
- Enterprise Minnesota
- Minnesota Workforce Council Association
- Minnesota High Tech Association
- Growth & Justice
- National Tooling and Machining Association
- North American Die Casting Association
- Precision Machined Products Association
- Precision Metalforming Association
- Aeronautical Repair Station Association
- American Concrete Pressure Pipe Association
- McGough Construction
- SciMathMN
- Genesys Works
- Walser Automotive Group
- Top Tool
- Wilson Tool